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Note verbale dated 12 June 2009 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Council

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mali to the United Nations presents its compliments to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Council and has the honour to forward the national report of Mali on the assessment of national strategies of development for consideration under item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda (see annex).

The national report was validated at the national workshop, held on 22 May 2009, which was attended by representatives of national institutions, ministerial departments, civil, social and women's organizations and international agencies.

The report will serve as reference for the national voluntary presentation of Mali, on 7 July 2009, during the general debate of the Economic and Social Council.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 12 June 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Council

[Original: French]

National voluntary presentation of the Government of Mali

National report of Mali on the evaluation of the national development strategies implemented in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ARV	antiretroviral
CPS	Cellule de Planification et de Statistiques – Statistics Department
CSCRP	Cadre Stratégique pour la Croissance et la Réduction de la Pauvreté – Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction
CSLP	Cadre Stratégique de Lutte contre la Pauvreté – Strategic Framework to Combat Poverty
DTCP3	Diphtérie, Tétanos, Coqueluche et Poliomyélite (3 doses) – diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and poliomyelitis (3 doses)
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
GDP	gross domestic product
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
LOA	Loi d'Orientation Agricole – Agricultural Guidance Act
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDRI	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
PAGAM/GFP	Plan d'Action Gouvernementale pour l'Amélioration et la Modernisation de la Gestion des Finances Publiques – Government Action Plan for Improvement and Modernization of the Management of Public Finances
PDES	Projet de Développement Economique et Social – Economic and Social Development Project
PDI	Programme de Développement Institutionnel – Institutional Development Programme
PRODEC	Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education – Ten-Year Programme for Development of Education
PRODESS	Programme Décennal de Développement Sanitaire et Social – Ten-Year Health and Social Development Programme
PST	Projet Sectoriel de Transport –Transport Sector Project
SCAP	Stratégie Commune d'Assistance Pays – common country assistance strategy
SDDR	Schéma Directeur du Développement Rural – Master Rural Development Plan
SE/HCNLS	Secrétariat Exécutif du Haut Conseil de Lutte contre le SIDA – Executive Secretariat of the High National Council to Combat AIDS
TBS	Taux Brut de Scolarisation – gross school enrolment rate

Executive summary

In recent years the Government of Mali has given expression to its intention to make combating poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals the central priorities of its development activities, in line with the objectives of the Economic and Social Development Project. To that end it drew up and adopted in 2002 a first Strategic Framework to Combat Poverty 2002-2006. At the conclusion of the implementation of that first Framework, a second-generation framework, entitled Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction 2007-2011, was adopted by the Government in December 2006.

These two documents are based on the national forecasting study "Mali 2025", carried out between 1997 and 1999 and covering the entire extent of the country, which served to gather the views of the people of Mali and their vision of society over the course of the coming generation. In line with the data thus collected, the President of the Republic drew up the Economic and Social Development Project, which lies squarely within the lines of the Strategic Framework.

In terms of macroeconomic performance, in 2008 Mali implemented, with assistance from technical and financial partners, a number of reform programmes which made it possible: (i) to achieve an average rate of growth of 5.9 per cent, (ii) to keep inflation below 3 per cent and (iii) to make progress in stabilizing public finance. These results also allowed the country to reach the completion point under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) in 2003 and to benefit from the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) in 2006.

In the area of combating poverty, the situation has significantly improved, in that in 2006 47.4 per cent of the population was living below the poverty line (157 920 CFA francs per year), as against 55.6 per cent in 2002.

Although malnutrition is still a public health problem in Mali, data show that weight insufficiency has seen a considerable drop, from 43.3 per cent in 1996 to 27.0 per cent in 2006.

In the field of basic education, the gross school enrolment rate has seen the following changes: 64.4 per cent in 2002, 67 per cent in 2003, 70.5 per cent in 2004, 74 per cent in 2005, 75 per cent in 2006, 77.6 per cent in 2007 and 80 per cent in 2008. Between 2006 and 2008, the gross entry rate went up from 74.2 per cent to 79.4 per cent. This progress achieved as a consequence of the implementation of the Ten-Year Programme for Development of Education and the support of the technical and financial partners makes it still conceivable that the objective of primary schooling for all of the children of Mali by the year 2015 can be achieved. However, the rate of illiteracy is fairly high, particularly in women. The efforts currently under way will need to be enhanced and accelerated.

In the area of empowerment of women, Mali has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. However, as a general rule women in Mali are still faced with severe handicaps in the economic, legal, institutional, sociocultural and technical spheres. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there has been a significant improvement in the ratio of girls to boys in terms of school enrolment, arising out of a genuine political will and the dynamism of women's associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In the health sector and the fight against HIV/AIDS, the implementation of the Ten-Year Health and Social Development Programme 2005-2009 has brought about a significant reduction in neonatal, infant and under-five mortality as well as in maternal morbidity and mortality. The significant progress achieved in the fight against HIV/AIDS has to do with several intervention strategies including, among others, intensification of activities of awareness-raising and advocacy, along with the mobilizing activities of the Executive Secretariat of the High National Council to Combat AIDS, which reports directly to the Office of the President, as well as the operationalization of the anti-HIV/AIDS cells in each sectoral department. The provision without charge of antiretroviral (ARV) therapy has also constituted a significant advance in prevention and management of HIV/AIDS in Mali.

However, the level of effort being made to implement policies and strategies to combat diseases makes it unlikely that the Millennium Development Goals will be achieved by the intended deadline, unless there is an intensification of the response and a major degree of external assistance.

Environment, sanitation and drinking water

There are still major pressures on the environment and the management of natural resources. In 2007 the country drew up a National Sanitation Policy. With regard to people's access to drinking water, major progress has been made both in urban and in rural areas, and achieving the Millennium Development Goal for this area is possible.

In Mali, the quality of governance remains a measure of success of development policies and programmes. Political and institutional reforms have contributed to the consolidation of the democratic process, being based on noteworthy practices and strategies in the field of governance. The governance challenges involved in achieving the Millennium Development Goals are fully understood by the Government, civil society and the private sector, all of whom are striving to make the most of management of policies and strategies based on results and impacts. The Government is deeply involved in the implementation of the Government Action Plan for Improvement and Modernization of the Management of Public Finances and with issues of external aid, which needs to be made more predictable and must be better integrated into national procedures in order to create the conditions for generalized provision of budgetary support.

In the area of partnership, the Government is striving to gain the greatest value from an active diplomacy and the promotion of quality public-private partnerships. Mali was one of the very first countries to subscribe to the principles of the Paris Declaration and made a major contribution to the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Accra.

The country is making an effort to manage its external debt in an effective manner in order to gain the benefit of relief measures. It has even succeeded in negotiating with several technical and financial partners the integration of external funding into its national budgetary procedures.

At the institutional level, it may be noted that there are regular sessions of the "Mali-Development Partners" Joint Commission which draw benefit from high-level political dialogue, and that the Aid Harmonization Secretariat has been made operational in order to

implement the action plan under the Paris Declaration, adopted in April 2007, and to ensure that it is followed up on. For their part, the partners have established a technical pool and drawn up a road map to support the implementation of the Paris Declaration, in particular including the definition of a common country assistance strategy.

The principal conclusions emanating from the First Report Tracking the Implementation of the MDGs in Mali (2005) indicate that, at the present rate of implementation of the policies and strategies to execute the development programmes and projects, the country will not be able to achieve **all of the Millennium Development Goals** by the target date of 2015.

However, instances of success and good practices have been observed in certain areas such as food self-sufficiency, universal primary schooling and access to drinking water. Thus there are grounds for hope, provided that the efforts already undertaken are maintained or intensified and that Mali's development partners are able to keep to their commitments.

The drafting and the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan 2006-2015 to Achieve the MDGs in Mali could prove the key to reversing the trends between now and 2015. The funding needs have been estimated and will require a major contribution from the development partners.

An effective mechanism for coordination, follow-up and evaluation, together with an effective results-based management system, has been put in place for implementation of the Ten-Year Plan.

Section 1. Introduction

The United Nations Economic and Social Council has provided an opportunity for countries to make voluntary national presentations during its annual ministerial review, allowing them not only to present the progress they have made but also to describe best practices for the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations development agenda.

The Government of Mali volunteered for this exercise, which consists of evaluating and analyzing, in the form of a national report, the implementation of its National Development Strategy (Stratégie Nationale de Développement – SND) in order to assess the progress made, or not made, towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Section 2. Objectives

The national report seeks to evaluate and analyze the national development strategies that have been implemented in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the MDGs. It allows the international community to assess the country's level of development, to share the best practices and the successful policies that can be transferred elsewhere, and at the same time to highlight the development needs and the policy recommendations necessary for the achievement of the MDGs.

Section 3. Features of national development strategies

In recent years the Government of Mali has given expression to its intention to make the fight against poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals the central priorities of its development activities, in line with the objectives of the Economic and Social Development Project (Project pour le Développement Economique et Social – PDES). To that end it drew up and adopted in 2002 a first Strategic Framework to Combat Poverty (Cadre Stratégique de Lutte contre la Pauvreté – CSLP) 2002-2006. At the conclusion of the implementation of that first Framework, a second-generation framework, entitled Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (Cadre Stratégique pour la Croissance et la Réduction de la Pauvreté – CSCRP) 2007-2011, was adopted by the Government in December 2006.

The Strategic Framework 2002-2006 was based on three priority strategic lines of action:

- bring about institutional development, improved governance and participation;
- develop human resources and access to basic social services;
- develop basic infrastructures and the productive sectors.

Difficulties encountered in the implementation of the first Strategic Framework

While the results of the first Strategic Framework were noteworthy, they did not reach the level hoped for. That was largely the result of a difficult international environment (effects of crises and wars in the subregion, a worsening in the terms of trade, the rise in the price of fuel) and difficulties on the national scale due in particular to unforeseen climatic events and natural disasters, the country's landlocked geography, the high costs of factors of production, poor control of population growth and the weakness of the country's social protection mechanisms.

On the basis of the lessons learned from the experience of the first Strategic Framework and the recommendations of the 2004 Geneva Round Table, the Government of Mali drew up a second-generation strategic framework.

The Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction, which covers the period 2007-2011, was largely prepared on the basis of the lessons learned from the evaluation of the 2002-2006 Strategic Framework. It is based on three strategic thrusts, which are intended to be mutually reinforcing: development of infrastructures and the productive sector, pursuit of structural reforms and strengthening of the social sector.

This document now constitutes the overarching reference framework for Mali's medium-term development policies and strategies and the principal instrument for negotiating with all of the country's technical and financial partners. It should be recalled that the Strategic Framework is based on the national forecasting study "Mali 2025", carried out between 1997 and 1999 and covering the entire extent of the country, which served to gather the views of the people of Mali and their vision of society over the course of the coming generation. In line with the data thus collected, the President of the Republic drew up the Economic and Social Development Project (Projet de Développement Economique and Social – PDES) which lies squarely within the lines of the Strategic Framework.

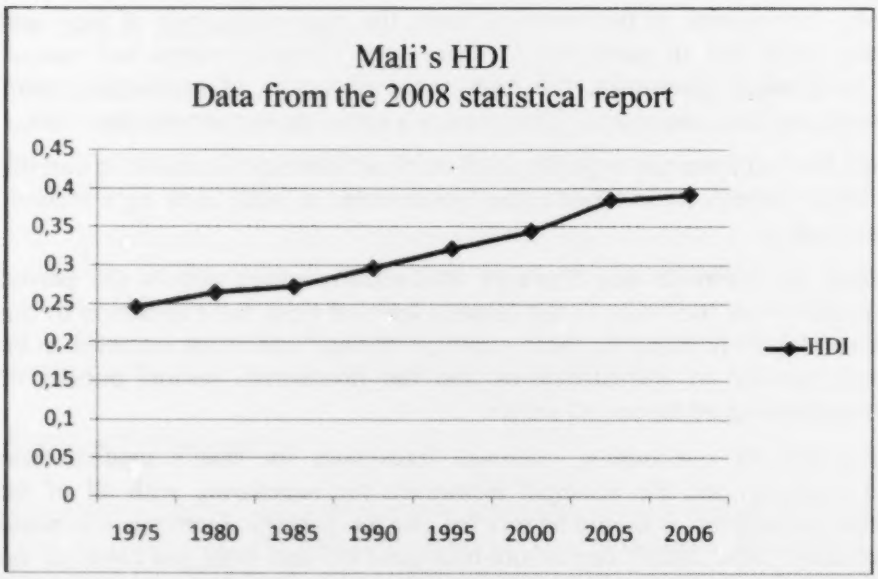
Section 4. Progress so far in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Mali

Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

A. Progress made in combating poverty

Income poverty diminished to a significant degree between 2001 and 2006. In 2001, 55.6 per cent of the population of Mali was living below the poverty line, as against 47.4 per cent in 2006. However, as a result in particular of strong population growth, the progress made towards reducing poverty remains insufficient to achieve this Millennium Development Goal between now and 2015, despite the noteworthy efforts of the Government of Mali and dynamic assistance from the principal development partners.

According to calculations of the observatory (National Human Development Report, 2008), Mali is progressively improving its level of human development, even if the rate of improvement still places it among the low human development index (HDI) countries. The results for Mali show – and this is the important factor – that in thirty years, the HDI rose by 59.5 per cent. This upward trend of the HDI became more marked between 2000 and 2006 owing to the good results obtained in the areas of growth and progress in the essential social sectors.



B. Progress achieved in combating hunger and malnutrition

Over the past ten years, significant progress has been recorded in the areas of food security and in combating malnutrition.

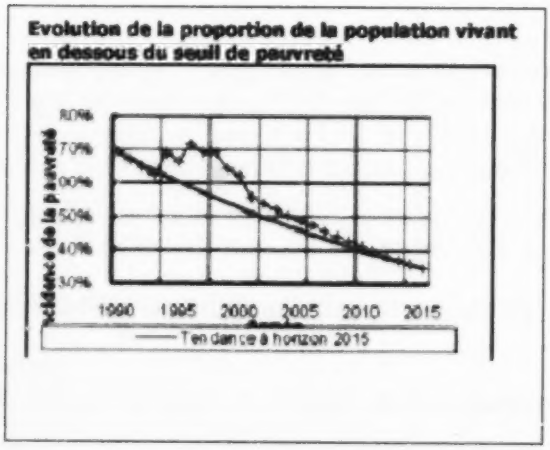
Table 1
Indicators of malnutrition

Levels \ *Year*	*1996*	*2001*	*2006*
Emaciation (weight against height, %)	24.5	11.0	13.3
Weight insufficiency (weight against age, %)	43.3	33.0	27.0

Source: National Statistics Directorate/Health Statistics Department, results of the M population health surveys

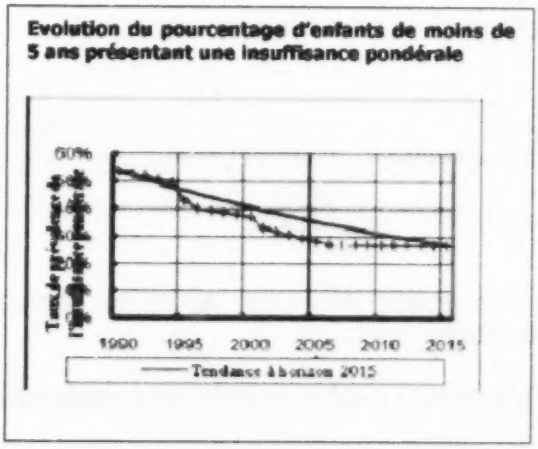
This table shows that the percentage of those suffering from weight insufficiency showed a very noticeable improvement between 1996 and 2006, dropping from 43.3 per cent to 27.0 per cent.

Figure 1
Change in the proportion of the population 5 living below the poverty line



Incidence — Incidence of poverty
Tendance — Trend from now until 2015

Figure 2
Change in the percentage of children under suffering from weight insufficiency



Taux de — Prevalence of weight insufficiency
Tendance — Trend from now until 2015

Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education by the year 2015

Analysis of certain indicators for access shows that progress has been made in the field of education in Mali. The rise in the gross school enrolment rate at primary level demonstrates that as a result of the installation of school infrastructures and the recruitment of teachers, a growing number of children are attending primary school and the discrepancy between boys and girls is gradually shrinking. The gross enrolment rate rose from 77.6 per cent in 2006-2007 to 80 per cent (70.7 per cent for girls) in 2007-2008.

The efforts undertaken to increase literacy have brought about an increase in the rate of literacy from 24 per cent in 2003 to 26.2 per cent in 2006 and 26.4 per cent in 2007.

Figure 3
Net primary school enrolment rate

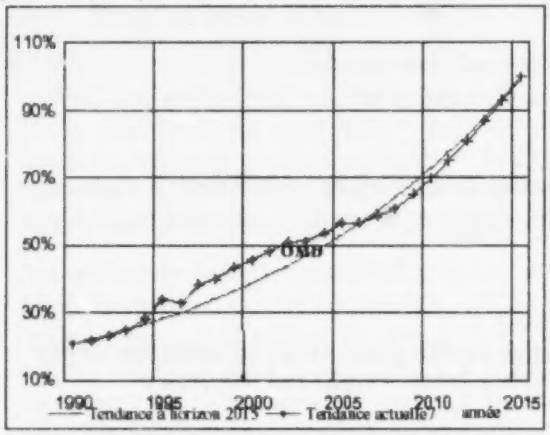
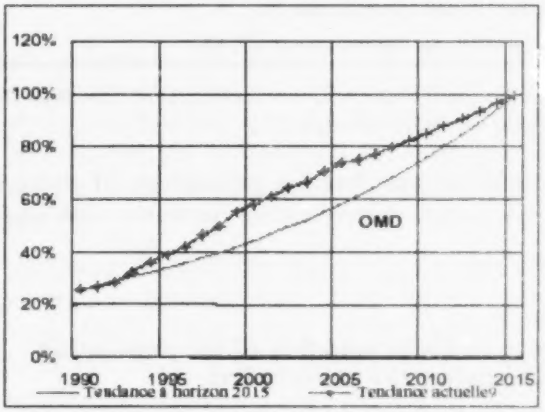


Figure 4
Gross primary school enrolment rate



Source: Education Statistics Department and authors.

Tendance	Trend from now until 2015
Tendance actuelle	Current trend
année	year
OMD	MDG

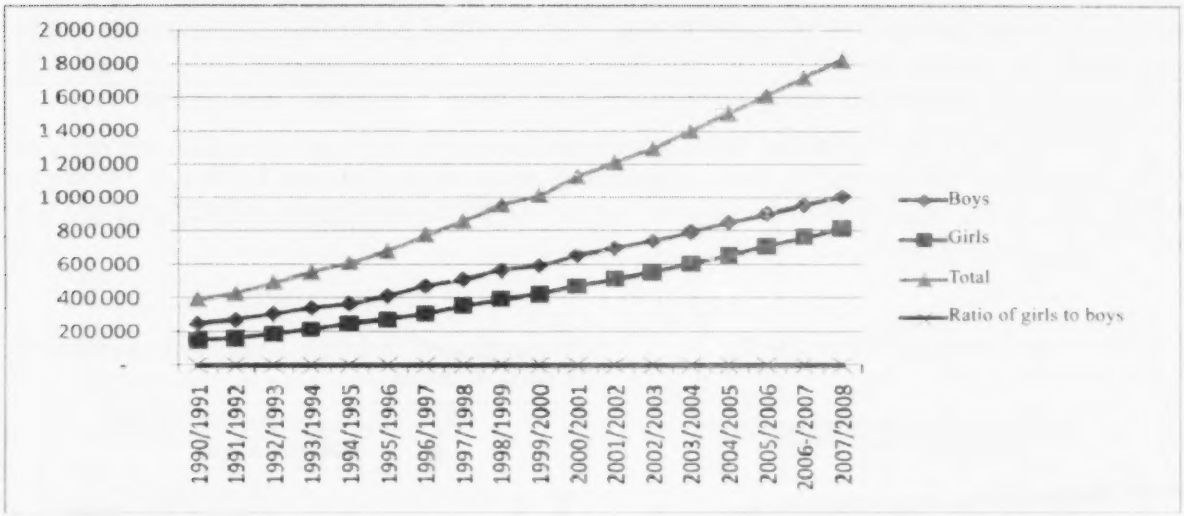
These two graphs show that achieving primary education for all the children of Mali is conceivable by 2015.

Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

The ratio of girls to boys in primary education has developed as follows over the course of the period 1994-2008:

1994: 62 girls per 100 boys; 1998: 68 girls per 100 boys; 2004: 76 girls per 100 boys; 2005: 77 girls per 100 boys; 2006: 79 girls per 100 boys; 2007: 80 girls per 100 boys; 2008: 81 girls per 100 boys.

It can be seen that there has been a significant improvement in the ratio of girls to boys in terms of school enrolment, arising out of a genuine political will and the dynamism of women's associations and NGOs.



Source: From the Malikunnafoni database

Women are underrepresented in all decision-making bodies, both in elected offices and in appointed ones. Their low presence in elected posts is seen right from the level of the political parties, of which only 3 per cent of the leaders are women. This disadvantaged situation in the parties results in turn in a low level of representation of women in other elected posts (8 per cent in the High Council of Local Communities and 15 per cent in the Parliament in 2007).

On the other hand, women are better represented in appointed bodies than in elected ones (23 per cent in the Government and 33 per cent in the Constitutional Court in 2007).

Goal 4. Reduce child mortality

Table 2
Movement of some indicators in the health field, 2001-2006

Year / *Indicators*	*M III PHS 2001*	*M IV PHS 2006*
Total fertility rate	6.8	6.6
Use of modern family planning methods (%)	5.7	6.9
Prenatal consultation (first visit) (%)	47	70
Attended childbirth (%)	41	49
Vaccination coverage against measles (%)	49	68.4
DPT3 vaccination coverage (%)	40	68
Infant mortality/1,000 live births	113	96
<5 child mortality/1,000 live births	229	191
Exclusive breastfeeding (6 months) (%)	25	37.8

In 2001, the results of the M III population health survey (PHS) made it possible to estimate the rate of infant mortality at **113 per 1,000** and that of infant and young child mortality at **229 per 1,000.** The results of the survey thus demonstrated a relative drop in child mortality in Mali, of 10 and 9 percentage points respectively over a decade, or about 1 per cent per year.

Subsequently, this downward trend accelerated, since in 2006 (M IV PHS), the rates of infant and young child mortality were estimated respectively at **96.0 per 1,000** and **191.0 per 1,000**, thus giving significant reductions of 17 and 38 percentage points respectively (or 3.4 and 7.6 per cent per year).

Figure 5
Under-5 mortality rate per 1,000 live births

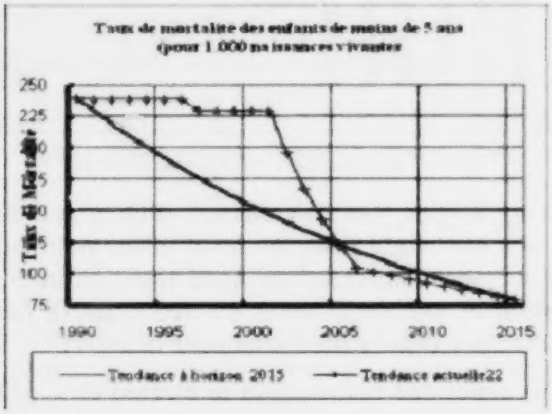
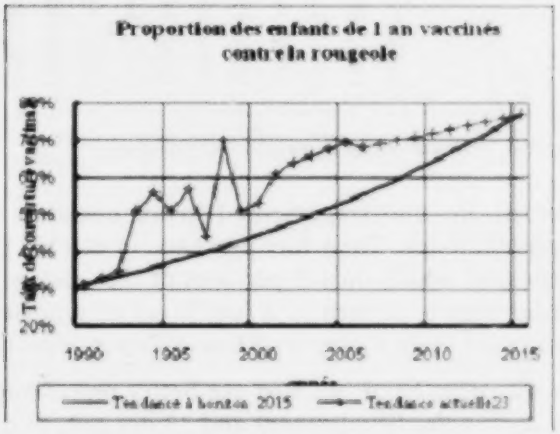


Figure 6
Proportion of children 1 year old vaccinated against measles



Source: PHS and authors.

Taux (left chart) [at left side]	Mortality rate
(right chart) [at left side]	Vaccination coverage rate
Tendance	Trend from now until 2015
Tendance actuelle	Current trend

Goal 5. Improve maternal health

Over the period 1990-2000, the maternal mortality rate varied between 500 and 600 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.

The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel shows a clear improvement over the period 2001-2006, rising from 41 per cent to 49 per cent.

Despite this improvement, however, it would appear that it will be difficult to achieve the target expressed in terms of a three-quarters reduction in the maternal mortality rate from 1990 to 2015 without a significant improvement in health development activities and mobilization of sizeable external funding.

Figure 7
Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births

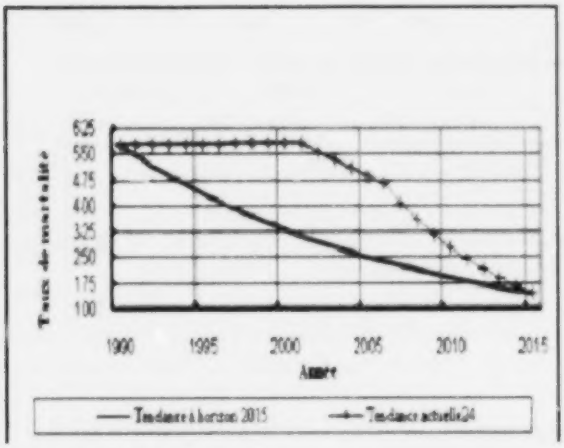
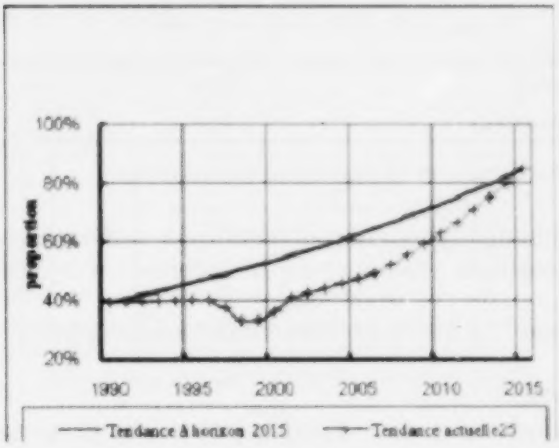


Figure 8
Proportion of childbirths attended by skilled health personnel



Source: PHS and authors.

Taux [at left side]	Mortality rate
Année	Year
Tendance	Trend from now until 2015
Tendance actuelle	Current trend
Proportion (right chart)[at left side]	Proportion

Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Table 3
Changes in seroprevalence rate (percentage)

Targets / *Year*	*Women*	*Men*	*National*
M III PHS 2001	2	1.3	1.7
M IV PHS 2006	1.5	1	1.3

In 2001, the national seroprevalence rate was **1.7 per cent,** with a rate of 2 per cent for women as against 1.3 per cent for men. By 2006, the rate of seroprevalence had dropped to **1.3 per cent** nationwide, with 1.5 per cent for women and 1 per cent for men. The most affected age group comprises the 30 to 34-year-olds. The scourge remains more of an urban phenomenon than a rural one. The progress made in the fight against HIV/AIDS has to do with several intervention strategies including, among others, intensification of activities of awareness-raising and advocacy, voluntary and anonymous screening and the provision of antiretroviral (ARV) therapy without charge.

Table 4
Development of the incidence of malaria and tuberculosis

Year / *Disease*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*
Malaria	67.16	72.96	74.57	82.35	85.3
Tuberculosis	0.56	0.42	1.18	0.30	0.70

Source: Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Although there are programmes to combat malaria and tuberculosis, the incidence of these two diseases is constantly on the increase, as is shown by the table above.

Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability

Table 5
People's access to drinking water, by geographical area

	Chronological series for the rate of access to drinking water (percentage)									
Area	*1990*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*Source*
Rural	37.70	46.40	56.90	60.60	62.50	64.30	63.70	67.60	69.91	CPS/MMEE-DNH*
Urban	53.20	58.70	57.10	59	66.30	70.20	76.70	75.90	76.34	CPS/MMEE-DNH*
National	41	49.90	57	60.10	63.80	66.10	67.40	70.10	71.71	CPS/MMEE-DNH*

* Statistical Department, Ministry of Mining, Energy and Water – National Directorate for Water Facilities.

In the area of development of water resources, major progress has been made in the access of both urban and rural populations to sources of drinking water. The proportion of the rural population with access to an enhanced source of water (tap, public fountain, bore-hole, large-diameter well) increased from 37.70 per cent in 1990 to 69.91 per cent in 2008. There was also a significant increase in the urban areas, from 53.2 per cent in 1990 to 76.34 per cent in 2008. This trend is reflected at national level: in 1990, 41 per cent of households in Mali had access to drinking water while the figure had reached 71.7 per cent by 2008.

Figure 9
Proportion of the population with access to an enhanced source of water in urban areas

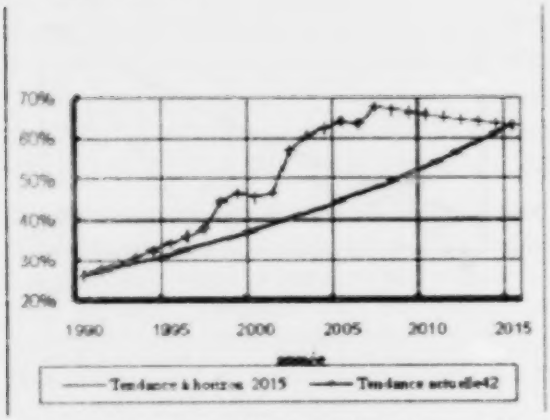
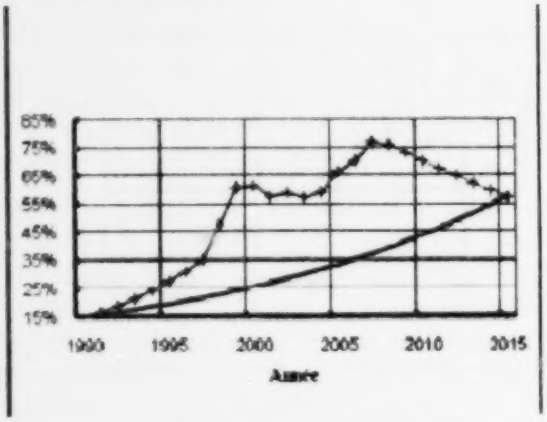


Figure 10
Proportion of the population with access to an enhanced source of water in rural areas



Source: From the Malikunnafoni database, 2008.

Tendance	Trend from now until 2015
Tendance actuelle	Current trend
Année	Year

Goal 8. Develop a global partnership for development

Between 1993 and 2007, official development assistance (ODA) received by Mali amounted as an annual average to approximately 11 per cent of GDP. Mali benefited from the 2006 bilateral debt cancellation initiative for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and from the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI), which resulted in a significant drop in the country's level of indebtedness.

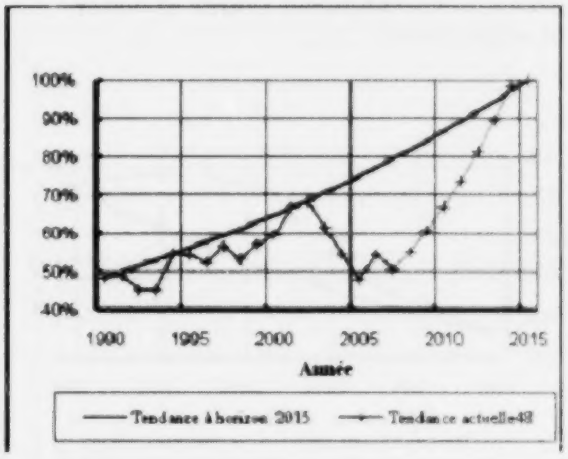
Mali subscribed to the Paris Declaration and established an Aid Harmonization Secretariat (Secrétariat pour l'Harmonisation de l'Aide – SHA) in 2008. Most of the technical and financial partners opted to provide global budgetary support as well as sectoral support, with the intention of improving the predictability of official development assistance.

In June 2008 Mali organized a donors' round table in Bamako with the aim of mobilizing the external funding necessary for the execution of its development programmes and policies. However, the whole amount of resources that will be needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals has not yet been effectively mobilized.

The financial crisis could have a severe impact on Mali's development assistance, with a risk of jeopardizing the funding of development and thus of the Ten-Year Plan for the Achievement of the MDGs. A further challenge arising is that of mobilizing internal resources: Mali is highly dependent on the outside world for funding its development and major efforts have still to be made in order to mobilize internal financing and make use of savings and credit in the country.

Figure 11
ODA as percentage of GDP

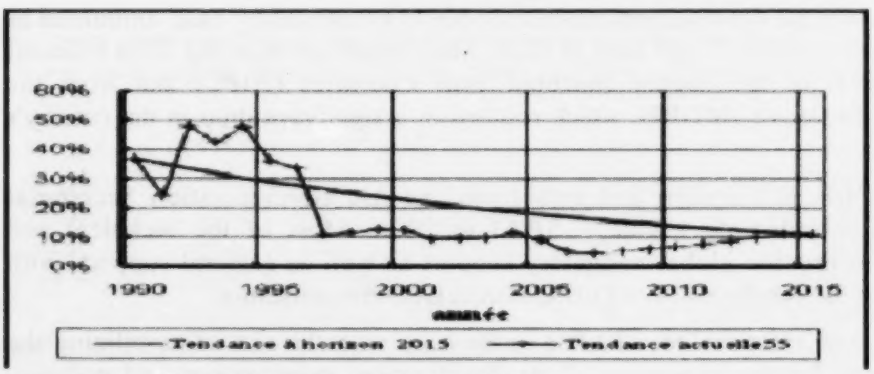
Figure 12
Openness of the economy of Mali



Source: From the Malikunnafoni database.

APD [left side]	ODA as % of GDP
Année	Year
Tendance	Trend from now until 2015
Tendance actuelle	Current trend

Figure 13
Development of debt service as percentage of exports of goods and services



Source: From the Malikunnafoni database, 2008.

Année	Year
Tendance	Trend from now until 2015
Tendance actuelle	Current trend

Section 5: Progress made, constraints encountered and lessons learned in the implementation of the national development strategies

In terms of macroeconomic performance, in 2008 Mali implemented, with assistance from technical and financial partners, a number of reform programmes which made it possible: (i) to achieve an average rate of growth of 5.9 per cent, (ii) to keep inflation below 3 per cent and (iii) to make progress in stabilizing public finance. These results also allowed the country to reach the completion point under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) in 2003 and to benefit from the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) in 2006.

In the area of combating poverty, the situation has significantly improved, in that in 2006 47.4 per cent of the population was living below the poverty line (157,920 CFA francs per year), as against 55.6 per cent in 2002. The depth of poverty has gone down by 4.5 points, from 21.2 per cent in 2001 to 16.7 per cent in 2006, which shows that while the poor are still poor, they have seen some improvement in their situation. Further, inequalities have diminished both at national level and in the rural areas. Although malnutrition is still a public health problem in Mali, data show that weight insufficiency has seen a considerable drop, from 43.3 per cent in 1996 to 27.0 per cent in 2006.

However, as a result in particular of strong population growth, the progress made towards reducing poverty remains insufficient to achieve this Millennium Development Goal between now and 2015, despite the noteworthy efforts of the Government of Mali and dynamic assistance from the principal development partners.

In the field of basic education, the gross school enrolment rate has seen the following changes: 64.4 per cent in 2002, 67 per cent in 2003, 70.5 per cent in 2004, 74 per cent in 2005, 75 per cent in 2006, 77.6 per cent in 2007 and 80 per cent in 2008. Between 2006 and 2008, the gross entry rate went up from 74.2 per cent to 79.4 per cent. The gross school enrolment rate for girls is 70.7 per cent, as against 89.5 per cent for boys: a discrepancy of 19 points in the index of parity between girls and boys. This discrepancy has been reduced considerably as a result of the multiple efforts made towards girls' schooling. This progress achieved as a consequence of the implementation of the Ten-Year Programme for Development of Education (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education – PRODEC) and the support of the technical and financial partners makes it still conceivable that the objective of primary schooling for all of the children of Mali by the year 2015 can be achieved. However, the rate of illiteracy is fairly high, in particular in women. The efforts currently under way will need to be enhanced and accelerated. Generally speaking, the Government has undertaken to redouble its efforts for the implementation of the Ten-Year Programme to obtain better results, notably in the overall quality of the educational system.

In the area of empowerment of women, Mali has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. However, as a general rule women in Mali remain faced with severe handicaps in the economic, legal, institutional, socio-cultural and technical spheres. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there has been a significant improvement in the ratio of girls to boys in terms of school enrolment, arising out of a genuine political will and the dynamism of women's associations and NGOs. The percentage of women

in elected offices was 6.4 per cent in 2008. There were 15 women parliamentarians out of a total of 147, in other words a representation of 10.2 per cent. Women are less well represented among the mayors: seven female mayors out of a total of 703.

However, the proportion of women in the government has gradually increased: there were three female ministers in 1995 and by 2007 there were seven women in the government.

In the health sector and the fight against HIV/AIDS, the implementation of the Ten-Year Health and Social Development Programme 2005-2009 (Programme de Développement Sanitaire et Social - PRODESS II) has brought about a significant reduction in neonatal, infant and under-five mortality as well as in maternal morbidity and mortality. Shortcomings in nutrition and infectious diseases have also dropped considerably. The significant progress achieved in the fight against HIV/AIDS has to do with several intervention strategies including, among others, intensification of activities of awareness-raising and advocacy, along with the mobilizing activities of the Executive Secretariat of the High National Council to Combat AIDS (Haut Conseil National de Lutte contre le SIDA - SE/HCNLS) which reports directly to the Office of the President, as well as the operationalization of the anti-HIV/AIDS cells in each sectoral department. The provision without charge of antiretroviral (ARV) therapy has also constituted a significant advance in prevention and management of HIV/AIDS in Mali.

The health sector has seen significant changes in the areas of planning, programming, follow-up and evaluation, and is making efforts to manage epidemiological surveillance with a progressive improvement in the relevant indicators. However, the level of effort being made to implement the policies and strategies to combat disease means that the Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved by the intended deadline unless there is an intensification of the response and a major degree of outside assistance.

Environment, drinking water and sanitation

Although Mali adopted its National Environment Protection Policy in 1998, and has signed several relevant international legal instruments, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, there are still major pressures on the environment and the management of natural resources. In 2007 the country drew up a National Sanitation Policy. In the area of development of water resources, major progress has been made in the access of both urban and rural populations to sources of drinking water, to the extent that in 2008, 71.7 per cent of households in Mali had access to drinking water, with a figure of 76.34 per cent for urban areas as against 69.91 per cent for the rural ones (Source: Statistical Department, Ministry of Mining, Energy and Water – National Directorate for Water Facilities).

In the agricultural sector and the fight against hunger, in order to turn Mali into an agricultural power, the Strategic Framework and the Master Rural Development Plan (Schema Directeur de Développement Rural – SDDR) have been provided with instruments and policies based on a voluntary approach, such at the Agricultural Guidance Act, the National Irrigation Development Strategy, with a government land improvement plan to provide 100,000 hectares with total control of water needs between 2003 and 2007, the Rice Initiative, the National Stockbreeding Policy with a five-year programme for improvement of pasture land, and the

National Food Security Programme. The Agricultural Guidance Act has made agriculture one of the economic development priorities, and incentive measures have been taken to attract investors to this sector, to modernize it and increase its performance. In order to make progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in this area and to achieve the central objective of the fight against hunger and malnutrition, Mali has set about promoting agriculture that is productive, diversified, sustainable and integrated, as well as accelerating the rate of performance of improvements to supply water to agriculture (100,000 hectares, including 60,000 hectares falling within the "Offices du Niger" irrigation scheme). It has also undertaken to open up the regions of production and to integrate the agricultural and agro-food markets, and to facilitate access to agricultural credit, to encourage the provision of equipment to farmers, stockbreeders and fishermen and to strengthen the dynamics of governance and the capacities of the actors and beneficiaries both centrally and decentrally.

In the area of food security, no region is identified as being at high risk of food shortages, following the 2007 rainy season. Furthermore, food security will be enhanced by an initiative under the National Food Security Programme covering the 166 most vulnerable communes, the establishment of cereal banks in every commune in the country, an increase in the national food security stocks and ongoing monitoring of the food situation through an uprated early warning system.

In the energy sector, in March 2006 the Government adopted a National Energy Policy document, the main objective of which is to contribute to the sustainable development of the country by supplying services accessible to the greatest possible number and at the lowest possible cost – services which will simultaneously stimulate socio-economic activities and the provision of improved services. In order to achieve this, the Government intends, among other undertakings, a reinforcement of the institutional and regulatory framework in the energy sector, the creation and implementation of a powerful system of energy planning, the development of domestic energy and rural electrification, the promotion of renewable energy sources and alternatives to traditional fuels, the development of an interconnected national network, and linkups with the electricity systems of the other countries of the subregion. The level of access to electricity nationwide was 19.39 per cent in 2006, rising to 22.53 per cent in 2007 and to 25.41 per cent in 2008. In the urban areas the level was 56.23 per cent in 2006, it dipped to 55.58 per cent in 2007 and then rose to 58.19 per cent in 2008. In the rural areas it was 4.75 per cent in 2006, rising to 8.23 per cent in 2007 and to 11.23 in 2008. With regard to the supply of oil products to the country, the Government has been making efforts to diversify its sources of supply and to improve the organization of the operators in order to bring about a steady decrease in the amount being spent on oil.

In the transport sector, the **"Policy Document for the Transport Sector in the framework of the Transport Sector Project II 2008-2012"**, adopted by the Government in April 2007, includes an investment programme making allowance for the following aspects: (i) ongoing and periodic maintenance of the priority network, (ii) development and modernization of the road transport system, (iii) restoration of the railway infrastructure and modernization of the rolling stock, (iv) development of the infrastructures and modernization of the equipment at the Bamako-Sénou international airport and the domestic airports, (v) dredging of navigable canals

and procurement of suitable waterway transportation equipment as well as construction of quays and river ports and (vi) development of urban roadways.

In the area of employment, 72.7 per cent of the population of working age (15-64 years) is employed and 7.7 per cent is unemployed. In other words, seven individuals for every ten in the population of working age are in fact participating in economic activities in the country. The rate of employment at national level is approximately 79 per cent for men and 67 per cent for women. The capital Bamako has the lowest rate of employment (46 per cent), followed by the other towns (64 per cent) and then the rural areas, where the employment rate is the highest (79 per cent). Overall, women are more affected by unemployment than men.

The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training has invested around 20 billion CFA francs in activities to promote employment and vocational training, throughout the country. These investments and various forms of activities have made it possible to increase the number of new jobs created. For example, in 2008, the employment services recorded 26,224 new jobs created (permanent and temporary, public and private) and significant efforts have been invested in the areas of social protection and combating vulnerability.

In Mali, the quality of governance remains a measure of success of development policies and programmes. Political and institutional reforms have contributed to the consolidation of the democratic process, being based on noteworthy practices and strategies in the field of governance. Particular examples here are (i) Law No. 93-008 of 11 February 1993 laying down the conditions for the free administration of the Local Communities, (ii) Law No. 029 of 23 July 2008 relating to the authority regulating public procurement contracts and the provision of public services, (iii) the Democratic Appeals System, which is a practice unique in the world allowing any citizen to appeal directly to the Government concerning acts which he or she considers to infringe the human rights set forth by it; (iv) the institution of the Auditor General or (v) the concept of the border country which allows for enhanced cross-border cooperation and regional integration. Other examples are the adoption by the National Assembly of the law creating the Family Code, the adoption by the Government of the abolition of the death penalty and the establishment of a reliable civil registry and electoral roll. The governance challenges involved in achieving the MDGs are fully understood by the Government, civil society and the private sector, all of whom are striving to make the most of management of policies and strategies based on results and impacts. This involves in particular the phenomenon, a critical factor, of corruption and the well-known weakness and inadequacy of the human resources and the physical materials in the public administration. The Government is working hard on strengthening the human resources and on enhancing the quality of the services for the users, through implementation of the Institutional Development Programme (Programme de Développement Institutionnel – PDI). The Government is also deeply involved in the implementation of the Government Action Plan for Improvement and Modernization of the Management of Public Finances (Plan d'Action Gouvernementale pour l'Amélioration et la Modernisation de la Gestion des Finances Publiques – PAGAM/GFP) and with issues of external aid, which needs to be made more predictable and must be better integrated into national procedures in order to create the conditions for generalized provision of budgetary support.

With regard to the **strengthening of the rule of law and public freedoms**, it should be stressed that Mali's situation is a relatively good one, and that the country has become a party to most of the relevant conventions. Political rights; freedom of expression, of the press and of association; freedom of thought, conscience and religion are enshrined in the Constitution and are generally properly respected. However, the legal system is inadequate and in need of support in terms both of capacity and of training. In this area the Government has initiated and implemented the Ten-Year Justice Development Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de la Justice – PRODEJ), the objective of which is to facilitate the citizenry's access to justice, develop alternative conflict resolution procedures, enhance the credibility of the decisions of the justice system and guarantee protection of public and individual freedoms.

With regard to decentralization, there is not yet any evidence that the process is having any impact on people's level of poverty, given the low level of financial and technical capacity of the communities, the limited degree of transfer of skills and resources of the State to the communities, the insufficient support from the Council of State, and the fact that a mechanism for participation by the population is not yet operational. The Government has fully committed itself to the complex handover, laying the foundations for a real transfer of skills and resources, as stipulated by the laws of the Republic. At the present time, genuine advances in the transfer of skills and resources are beginning to be observed, to a slow and hesitant degree, in the fields of education, health and water supply.

Civil society, organized in consortiums or forums, is gradually becoming a credible and constructive counterpart to the Government and the development partners, capable of influencing decisions in a detailed and strategic way at national and local levels. The programme intended to increase the dynamism of civil society's participation in the preparation, implementation, tracking and evaluation of the Strategic Framework to Combat Poverty has created a useful opportunity for civil society to become involved in a professional manner in the improvement of and follow-up to the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction.

Section 6. Challenges and successes

The accelerated growth strategy and the lines of action under the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction 2007-2011 are intended to achieve long-lasting and sustainable growth, capable of improving the country's socio-economic situation and facilitating the achievement of the MDGs. Nevertheless, several bottlenecks due to an unfavourable international and national environment go a long way to explain the only modest results obtained. The challenges to be overcome in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 involve ensuring the competitiveness of the economy of Mali in a context of a dynamic process of regional integration and evolutionary globalization, diversifying the sources of growth in order to widen the range of goods and services on offer and turning the private sector into the main motor of growth. However, the country remains prey to unexpected climatic events and the volatility of international prices for basic products.

In terms of successes in the implementation of national development strategies, reference may be made to the progress achieved in the area of food security, the striking advances in reaching

most of the indicators to do with basic education, the reduction in health costs for households, the achievements in the fight against HIV/AIDS, in terms of prevention and management of the pandemic, **the implementation of the "Compact" whose general objective is to define a single and harmonized framework for increasing and improving aid effectiveness in the health sector in order to achieve the MDGs**, and the widening of the supply of drinking water. Additionally, even if the level of the transfers of resources and skills is not yet effective in the process of decentralization, the current tendency is relatively favourable. Numerous initiatives to promote decentralization and regionalization are in progress in Mali. Attention should also be drawn to the ongoing operationalization of the National Action Plan for Employment, which is an essential component of poverty reduction, as well as the dynamism of the partnership framework and the existence of a tracking and evaluation system for the Ten-Year Plan 2006-2015 to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Mali.

Furthermore, in addition to having drawn benefit from the experience of the **"Millennium Villages"** in order to increase the chances of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, the Government has initiated an innovative project involving **local work on the MDGs in the 166 communes** most vulnerable to food crises. This project has been brought to the attention of the development partners and should make a qualitative contribution to poverty reduction and consolidation of peace and security in the north of the country. This large-scale programme could accelerate the implementation and the dynamic process of taking ownership of the Millennium Development Goals by the beneficiary populations.

According to the principal conclusions emanating from the First Report Tracking the Implementation of the MDGs in Mali (Premier Rapport de Suivi de la Mise en Œuvre des OMD au Mali) (2005), at the present rate of implementation of the policies and strategies to execute the development programmes and projects, the country will not be able to achieve **all of the Millennium Development Goals** by the target date of 2015. However, in certain areas such as food self-sufficiency, universal primary schooling and access to drinking water there are grounds for hope, provided that the efforts already undertaken are maintained or intensified and that Mali's development partners are able to keep to their commitments.

The drafting and the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan 2006-2015 to Achieve the MDGs in Mali could prove the key to reversing the trends between now and 2015.

Section 7. Partnership and funding needs

In the area of partnership, the Government is striving to make the most of active diplomacy and the promotion of quality public/private partnerships. However, mobilizing development aid and attracting foreign direct investment constitute a major hurdle to be overcome if the Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved. Mali organized a donors' round table in Bamako on 12 and 13 June 2008, following on from the one in 2004, which enabled the country to strengthen the coordination and mobilization of resources with its technical and financial partners, through identifying the ways and means to accelerate growth and the progress towards the MDGs and to record major financing commitments to assist it to carry out its development efforts. Mali was one of the very first countries to subscribe to the principles

of the Paris Declaration and made a major contribution to the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Accra.

The country is making an effort to manage its external debt in an effective manner in order to gain the benefit of relief measures. It has even succeeded in negotiating with several technical and financial partners the integration of external funding into its national budgetary procedures.

At the institutional level, it may be noted that there are regular sessions of the "Mali – Development Partners" Joint Commission which draw benefit from high-level political dialogue, and that the Aid Harmonization Secretariat has been made operational in order to implement the action plan under the Paris Declaration, adopted in April 2007, and to ensure that it is followed up on. For their part, the partners have established a technical pool and drawn up a road map to support the implementation of the Paris Declaration, in particular including the definition of a common country assistance strategy (Stratégie Commune d'Assistance Pays – SCAP).

The funding needs have been estimated and will require a major contribution from the development partners. Specifically, the implementation of the programmes of the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction – Economic and Social Development Project, and of the Millennium Development Goals, will require a total of around 8,676 billion CFA francs for the period 2008-2012. Of that total, 5,865 billion CFA francs can be raised from the national budget and from the projects and programmes financed by the technical and financial partners. The shortfall amounts to 2,810 billion CFA francs, or approximately 5.7 billion US dollars. The funding that still needs to be found may be divided up among the various actors as follows:

- Technical and financial partners: 2,070 billion CFA francs (approximately 4.1 billion US dollars), or 74 per cent;
- Government: 388.778 billion CFA francs (approximately 0.8 billion US dollars), or 14 per cent;
- Beneficiaries: 352 billion CFA francs (approximately 0.7 billion US dollars), or 13 per cent of the total.

The financial crisis could have a severe impact on Mali's development assistance, with a risk of jeopardizing the funding of development and thus of the Ten-Year Plan for the Achievement of the MDGs. A further challenge arising is that of mobilizing internal resources: Mali is highly dependent on the outside world for funding its development and major efforts have still to be made in order to mobilize internal financing and make use of savings and credit in the country.

An effective mechanism for coordination, follow-up and evaluation, together with an effective results-based management system, has been put in place for implementation of the Ten-Year Plan.

Section 8: Conclusions and prospects

As against a forecast of 7 per cent, the economy of Mali grew by 5.9 per cent in 2008, compared with 4.3 per cent in 2007. The shortfall is essentially the result of an unfavourable

international environment, marked by a series of global crises which have had a major impact on the country's economy. At the macrobudgetary level, Mali has benefited from resources from the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, as well as from those from the HIPC Initiative.

Halving poverty between now and 2015 is possible but its complete elimination is not, in particular because of inequalities and the severe population pressure which together seem to constitute a major drag on combating poverty in Mali.

Significant advances have been recorded in the fields of food self-sufficiency, primary education, people's access to drinking water and the fight against HIV/AIDS. However, sustained efforts will have to be deployed in the fields of health, environmental protection, gender equality, governance and partnership in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015.

Mali has quite significant economic and social assets which can guarantee strong growth and sustainable development. With a view to accelerating the progress being made towards achieving the MDGs by the target date of 2015, the Government has already identified new sources of growth, which will be prudently exploited. Public infrastructures will be strengthened and diversified, particularly within the energy and transport sectors. The business environment will be enhanced in order to promote investment, generate wealth, create jobs and reduce unemployment. At the same time, the structures of the Government will be refocused on leadership functions, strengthened and enhanced in performance. It should be stressed in this regard that the efforts towards achievement of the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction and the Millennium Development Goals entail a shared responsibility, with involvement of the Government of Mali, the Malian people and the international community. In this regard, full use should be made of the opportunities which are offered by the global partnership for development, the dynamics of regional integration and the mobilization of sources of financing at local level, with the goal of reducing the uncertainties related to external aid and progressively lessening the country's dependence on such aid.